

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application:

Claims 1-16 (cancelled)

17. (New) An apparatus for removing adhesive labels from garment hangers, the apparatus comprising:

at least one washing apparatus adapted to direct pressurised liquid onto an adhesive label of at least one garment hanger for melting adhesive of said label and removing said label from the hanger;

at least one loading apparatus for transporting the or each said hanger towards at least one said washing apparatus;

at least one unloading apparatus for transporting the or each said hanger away from at least one said washing apparatus; and

at least one drying apparatus for drying the or each said hanger subsequently to removal of an adhesive label therefrom.

18. (New) An apparatus according to claim 17, wherein at least one said loading apparatus comprises at least one rotatable shaft having a respective helical groove for engaging a hook of at least one said hanger, wherein rotation of the or each shaft about its respective longitudinal axis in use moves hangers along the or each said shaft towards at least one said washing apparatus.

19. (New) An apparatus according to claim 18, wherein at least one said rotatable shaft has a respective groove-free portion for receiving at least one said hanger prior to movement of the hanger towards at least one said washing apparatus.

20. (New) An apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the depth of at least one said groove increases in use in a direction towards at least one said washing apparatus.

21. (New) An apparatus according to claim 17, wherein at least one said washing apparatus comprises at least one spraying apparatus for directing at least one stream of liquid at elevated temperature onto an adhesive label of at least one hanger.

22. (New) An apparatus according to claim 21, wherein at least one said spraying apparatus is adapted to direct at least one said stream in a side-to-side and/or up and down motion.

23. (New) An apparatus according to claim 21, further comprising at least one recycling apparatus for recycling said liquid subsequently to spraying thereof onto at least one hanger.

24. (New) An apparatus according to claim 17, wherein at least one said unloading apparatus comprises at least one rotatable shaft having a respective helical groove for engaging a hook of at least one said hanger, wherein rotation of the or each shaft about its respective longitudinal axis in use moves hangers along the or each said shaft away from at least one said washing device.

25. (New) An apparatus according to claim 17, wherein at least one said drying apparatus at least partially surrounds at least one said unloading apparatus.

26. (New) An apparatus according to claim 25, wherein at least one said drying apparatus comprises an elongate chamber for drying at least one said hanger.

27. (New) An apparatus according to claim 17, further comprising at least one further drying apparatus for at least partially drying at least one hanger subsequently to washing thereof and prior to transport thereof by at least one said unloading apparatus.

28. (New) An apparatus according to claim 17, further comprising at least one support for supporting a hanger during washing thereof by at least one said washing apparatus.

29. (New) An apparatus according to claim 28, wherein at least one said support comprises a rotary support member for supporting at least one hanger and adapted to rotate to move the or each said hanger from a position facing at least one said loading apparatus to a position facing at least one said washing apparatus and/or from a position facing at least one said washing apparatus to a position facing at least one said unloading apparatus.

30. (New) An apparatus according to claim 29, further comprising at least one locking apparatus for locking at least one said hanger in position on said rotary member.

31. (New) An apparatus according to claim 30, wherein at least one said locking apparatus comprises at least one hook receiving member for receiving a respective hook of a hanger, and is adapted to lock at least one hanger in position on said rotary member in response to receiving a hook on at least one said hook receiving member.